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Good Times and Bob

By AGNES VOLENTINE

KENNETH, Gerry and Bob were passing a lunch-stand, on their way to school. And Gerry seeing a new sign, read it slowly aloud:

"BEER—SOLD—HERE."

"Yes, they're selling it lots of places now," said Kenneth. "But I don't believe in it; it hurts people."

Gerry swelled up importantly. "Well, my uncle's a lawyer,—he knows,—an' he says *this* beer's not bad like bootleg stuff; it's not even intoxicating."

Kenneth looked uncertain.

"And I heard him say," went on the other, "that it's helping bring good times back—the tax, you know."

Kenneth did not know. In fact, he hadn't heard much about it, except that a tax had been put on beer.

As he hesitated, Gerry asked: "You want good times, don't you?"

"Of course." Money had been too scarce in Kenneth's home not to be sure of that.

"Well, then—"

The third boy, Bob, a little behind the rest, had been taking no part in the talk. But now, coming closer, he suddenly spoke up:

"You say beer brings good times? H'm, 'taint bringin' good times to *our* house."

The other boys, surprised into silence, listened closely as he went on, "Daddy's got a good job now, you know, running a truck. And Mother was awful pleased over it,—thought now we'd have plenty, and could pay up our old bills. But Dad got to stopping sometimes

for a glass of beer. Heard him tell a neighbor he needed it when he was working hard."

"But pretty soon," went on the boy, "it must have been more'n a glass. Anyhow, he got to coming home acting sorta strange. And he didn't have much money left for groceries an' things, let alone the old bills. Mother's afraid he'll lose his job, too. She's awful worried."

His voice took on a bitter tone. "And *that's* why I can't get the new bicycle Dad promised me."

The others nodded soberly. "That's rotten luck," Gerry sympathized.

But Bob was not through. "You think beer's not intoxicating?" he reminded Gerry. "Huh, don't you b'lieve it. It's intoxicating for Dad, all right. Last night he came home—drunk."

The terrible memory brought a quiver to the boy's lips.

The other two walked on thoughtfully. Gerry had no more arguments for beer, and Kenneth knew now that those first arguments were all wrong.

Finally Bob looked up. "They can talk all they please," he finished feelingly, "about beer bringing good times. 'Taint bringin' good times for *us*."

CIGARET-SMOKING AND AN AGENCY

By WILLIS MEHANNA

There are other factors to be considered about cigaret-smoking besides its injury to the health and eyes, big as these are.

Two young men were traveling through the farming districts in a coupe and were the agents for the papers of an agricultural publishing company.

They stopped at the home of an old farmer and tried to get him to subscribe for some of the papers. He would not and the more they talked the less inclined he became and they finally drove on disappointed.

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